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Use of Cling Peaches

Cling peaches may be used in the same ways as freestone peaches. In canning them or making preserves the main difference between the two varieties is in the peeling and pitting. Cling peaches are usually peeled by the lye method rather than by scalding. Lye peeling must be followed by a thorough washing under running water. The seeds may be easily removed from the freestone peaches by hand, but as indicated by their name, cling peaches take more manipulation to remove the seed from the fruit.

Pitting: Peach pitting knives are recommended for use in pitting cling peaches where large quantities are to be canned. Such knives can be secured from distributors of cannery supplies.

The peach is cut through to the pit, following the natural line that runs between the halves from the stem end to the tip of the peach. Use of a stainless steel knife will avoid discoloration of the cut edges. The point of the pitting knife is inserted at the split and pressed down to the peach pit, then moved from side to side to free the stone from the upper half. The cut should be made as closely as possible to the stone to avoid excessive waste. Remove the upper half and, using the same method, cut the stone free from the lower half of the peach.

The cutting is faster if one person makes the first cut and another removes the pit. When this cannot be done, a large quantity of peaches should be cut through in one operation and the pits removed later to avoid the constant changing of knives.

Peaches may be canned in halves with a medium or heavy sirup (see attached sirup table) or they may be made into preserves. Well ripened peaches may be used for peach butter.

Canning Peaches

Container: Use plain tin cans.

Preparation: Remove green, overripe, or defective fruit. To loosen skins of freestone peaches place in a blanching basket and dip into boiling water for 1 to 2 minutes, according to the ripeness of the fruit. Water under boiling temperature will cook rather than loosen the skin of peaches. Remove blanching basket from boiling water and dip into cold water to stop the peaches from heating and to loosen their skins. Do not permit peaches to stand in cold water. Slip off skins, cut peaches in halves, and remove the seed. Peaches may be canned either as halves or slices. If desired, one cracked seed may be added to each can for flavor.

To peel cling peaches, dip the basket of peaches in a boiling lye solution (containing  $1\frac{1}{2}$  percent of canners' lye) for 15 to 30 seconds. Do not leave in

the lye long enough to remove the skins. Transfer to a tank of cold water, raise and lower the basket several times, and shake slightly. Repeat in a second tank of cold water. This procedure should wash the lye off the peaches and remove the skins. Then proceed as for freestone peaches.

If it is necessary for peaches to stand any length of time after peeling and before filling into cans, discoloration may be prevented by dipping the fruit for 2 minutes in an acid-brine solution made of 2 tablespoonfuls of vinegar and 2 tablespoonfuls of salt added to each gallon of water needed.

Filling: Pack peaches closely into cans in overlapping layers. Fill to within  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch of the top of can.

Add boiling sirup to fill the can completely. A medium or heavy sirup may be used. Make sirup before peaches are peeled, allowing  $\frac{3}{4}$  to 1 cup for each No. 2 can of peaches. Boil sugar and water together for 5 minutes and remove any scum that forms on the top. Set aside until needed. Do not continue heating as this will concentrate the sirup more than is desirable but heat to boiling just before using.

Exhausting: Exhaust peaches to a center can temperature of 170°-180° F. The higher temperature is better if it can be obtained quickly.

Sealing: Seal cans as soon as the center can temperature is reached. Do not permit cans to cool after exhausting and before processing.

Processing: Process peaches in boiling water (212° F) as follows:

	<u>Freestone peaches</u>	<u>Cling peaches</u>
No. 2 cans	20 minutes	25 minutes
No. 2½ cans	25 "	30 "
No. 3 cans	25 "	30 "
No. 10 cans	40 "	45 "

Cooling: Immediately after processing is completed, cool the cans as rapidly as possible to 100° F. This leaves enough heat in the cans to dry them and prevent rusting. When the cans are removed from the cooling water they should be tilted to drain off excess water, and then should be stacked in a well-ventilated place until cold. Do not put cans in cartons until they are cold and dry.

#### Proportions of sugar and water for sirup

Percent : of sugar:	Consistency : of sirup :	Sugar needed per gallon of water			
		<u>pounds</u>	<u>ounces</u>	<u>cups</u>	<u>quarts</u>
20 :	Light :	2	2	5	1-1/4
30 :	Moderately light :	3	10	8	2
40 :	Medium :	5	9	12-1/2	3-1/8
50 :	Moderately heavy :	8	6	19	4-3/4
60 :	Heavy :	12	8	28	7

Prepare sirup in advance of the time it is to be used. Boil the sugar and water together for 5 minutes to dissolve the sugar and remove air from the sirup. Skim off any skum that forms on top. The sirup should not be boiled too long because the water will evaporate and the desired consistency will not be obtained.

The pounds of sugar needed may be estimated from the table given. From  $\frac{3}{4}$  to 1 cup of sirup should be allowed for each No. 2 can of fruit.

Preserves: Cling peaches are especially good for making preserves since the pieces will stay whole in cooking.

Cut the peeled, pitted peaches into slices and add to the boiling sirup. Use an equal weight of sugar to fruit and add one gallon of water to each 25 pounds of sugar in making the sirup. The flavor of peach preserves may be improved by adding a small amount of lemon juice or citric acid to the sirup.

Cook peach preserves to 220° F. and fill at once into plain tin cans. Fill to within  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch of the top of cans.

Processing: If preserves are sealed at 220° F. and the cans are inverted immediately it is not necessary to give any further process.

Where there is any doubt about the closing temperature a process of 10 minutes in boiling water is recommended for all sizes of cans.

Peach butter: Cling peaches are not generally recommended for use in making peach butter; however, fully ripened fruit may be used for this purpose.

Cook the peaches in a small amount of water or steam them until soft enough to run through a coarse sieve. The following proportions of sugar to pulp may be used in making peach butter:

25 gallons peach pulp  
30 pounds granulated sugar  
5 ounces citric acid (if desired)

Cook to 218° F. and fill at once into plain tin cans. Fill to within  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch of the top of cans.

Processing: If peach butter is sealed at 218° F. and the cans are inverted immediately it is not necessary to give any further process. Where there is any doubt about the closing temperature a process of 10 minutes in boiling water is recommended for all can sizes.

Fresh Peaches: Cling peaches do not have as good flavor or texture for eating fresh as freestone peaches, but may be used satisfactorily in making shortcake, cobbler or pies. The addition of a little lemon juice or citric acid will bring out the peach flavor in cooking.



